



Sarratt Parish Council

Policies and Procedures: Equal Opportunities

Sarratt Parish Council's intention is to be an effective Equal Opportunities organisation. It will do everything in its power to ensure that everyone has equal access, and is treated with respect in relation to employment, Council services and other activities, irrespective of their gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, or social class. Sarratt Parish Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Employees

All employees whether full-time, part-time, contractors, agency workers, or temporary staff, will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of discrimination, intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. Actions, behaviours and attitudes should consistently demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of an individual, irrespective of the position they have within the organisation.

This includes:

- Making every effort to create a workplace where employees are valued, listened to and their contribution treated with respect.
- Providing training, as appropriate, to ensure employees are made aware of their rights and responsibilities to each other, to Councillors, to service providers, to other organisations and to members of the public on equal opportunity issues.
- Ensuring that discrimination and harassment in any form is considered unacceptable behaviour and will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- Any employee feeling that the policy has not been, or is not being, adhered to has a right to redress through the Grievance Procedure.

Recruitment

Sarratt Parish Council is committed to ensuring that it acts as an equal opportunity employer. No job applicant, employee, Councillor or service provider will be discriminated against because of gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, or social class. Sarratt Parish Council will ensure that this is reflected in all recruitment, selection, personnel, and other procedures, and will investigate any complaints and respond accordingly.

- Vacancies will be advertised with the object of encouraging applications from anyone to whom the post may be of interest.
- Job descriptions will be provided for all advertised posts along with a list of key job requirements and the experience necessary for the position so that potential candidates can be measured against these criteria in the selection process.
- Application forms will not provide the potential to discriminate at the point of application.
- Where possible interview panels will be made up of a diverse panel.
- Due regard will be paid by interview panels to cultural bias and the effect it may have on interview proceedings.

All recruitment and selection documentation should be retained for one year and will clearly record the reasons for an appointment.

Councillors

All Councillors are responsible for implementing the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy in their dealings with other Councillors; with Council staff and service providers; and with other organisations and members of the public. Actions, behaviours and attitudes should consistently demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of an individual. Unacceptable actions, behaviours or attitudes as they relate to equal opportunities will not be tolerated.

As a Service Provider

Sarratt Parish Council will strive to ensure that:

- All services provided by, or on behalf of, the Council are made accessible to all individuals and groups equally and without discrimination.
- All contractors directly supplying goods and services or executing works for, or on behalf of, the Council comply with the Council's policy on equal opportunities.
- All service users are treated with respect. Actions, behaviour and attitudes should consistently demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of an individual.
- No member of the public is disadvantaged, or treated less favourably than others, in terms of access to Council services. Where the Council's practice, policy or procedures are found to make access impossible or unreasonably difficult, Sarratt Parish Council will take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances, to change these practices, policies or procedures.
- Wherever practical, Council premises and other assets owned or operated by the Council such as playgrounds, recreation areas, allotments etc are accessible to all.

Monitoring of Equal Opportunities

Sarratt Parish Council will have responsibility for:

- The implementation and monitoring of this policy as it applies to Sarratt Parish Council.
- Addressing complaints from staff about discrimination or unfair treatment through the Council's Grievance Procedure.
- Addressing complaints from service providers, other organisations and members of the public about discrimination or unfair treatment through the Council's Complaints Procedure.

Reviewed and adopted: 9 January 2024